

A

REVIEW

OF THE

STATE

OF THE

BRITISH NATION.

Tuesday, April 22. 1712.

WHEN some of our publick Writers tell us in so many Words, That the Peace is made with France, and the Ancient Amity of the two Crowns, of Britain and France, restor'd ; What can any one say more, but wait to see in what manner this Wonder is brought to pass ? As I will join with no Man, to say it is a *Separate, Clandestine, French Peace*, till I see it ; that it is a *French, Dishonourable, Unsafe Peace*, till I see the Conditions, so neither will I venture to say the contrary, till something of the Particulars appear : — But as I ever said, I say still, let them answer for it to both God and Man,

who make a *Bad Peace*, and those who reject a *Good One*.

If it has all along been my Opinion, that whatever some Unthinking People might desire, yet that the Managers of our Publick Affairs would never venture to make a *Separate Peace*, so neither can it yet enter into my Thoughts ; and this, because I cannot suspect the Senses, whatever I might do the Integrity of the People I mean ; nay, if I was to give them up, as K——s, yet, till I also believe them F——s, it cannot enter into my Thoughts, that we shall take France by the Hand, and Face about upon our *Protestant Confederates*, as some People

now

now expect; a few Days will unfold this Riddle, and when I see these Mad Measures taken, I shall say farther, and there Heave that Article, which I believe will be quickly explain'd to us all.

I am now drawing this Volume to a close; I have, indeed, continu'd it longer than the usual length, expecting some Period should have been put to the general Liberty of the Press, and to this Work among the rest; and very glad I should have been, to lay down the Ungrateful Task, of Informing those who think they know, and Reproving those, who think they cannot Mistake: But while the Triumphs of obstinate Men on both Sides, go on, just Satyr cannot be silent; and while the Plague spreads, no Man ought to forbear attempting a Cure.

My next will End this Volume, when I shall take leave to state a Case, relating to Civil Affairs, between the poor Keel-Men of *Newcastle*, and the Magistrates there, which has receiv'd a Turn in *Parliament* since I took notice of it, different from what some expected, tho' not from what I always thought the Justice of Parliament must produce: As my next shall serve as an Introductory Preface to the Volume, I shall Treat the Subject a little more at large.

I cannot quit the Discourse of Peace and War so readily, however, as to say no more to it; there is an Incident, which has for some time been in View, and which, should it come upon the Stage, might put an End to all our Feuds, about who shall, or shall not Succeed to the Crown of *Spain*? And I'll close with it, rather to state the Reason and Meaning of all I have been saying before, than that I see any Prospect of the Fact.

The Hand of God having been heavy upon the Princes of the Blood in *France*, or, as we call it, the Royal Family; the three Immediate Heirs of the House of *Bourbon* have drop'd within one Year — The fourth has been so near Death, and so often

Reported to be Dead, that no Man, who has any View of these Things, can be without some Thought of what should have follow'd, in Case of the Demise of that Young Prince; and it may not be without its Uses, to lay down the Scheme — The Blow has hitherto been a Judgment to *France*, I cannot but think, had it gone on to the Fourth Head, it had been a Mercy to all *France* as well as to all *Europe*; my Reasons follow.

Had this Young Prince died, *Philip* now in Possession of the Crown of *Spain*, had been immediate apparent Heir to the Crown of *France*, and must have been immediately Created *Dauphin*; his Son, the Prince of the *Asturias*, must have been Heir Presumptive also, and upon the Demise of the Old King, would have been also Heir Apparent and *Dauphin*.

The King of *France* could then, even from his own Words, have had no Pretence to have continu'd King *Philip* in Possession of the Crown of *Spain*; for that he has all along Agreed, that it is not Reasonable or Safe for the Peace of *Europe*, that the Monarchies of *France* and *Spain* should ever come to be Govern'd by the same Person, and has offer'd to enter into any Measures with the Allies to prevent it.

It has always, till now, been the Notion, nay, an Establish'd Principle of the Confederate Powers of *Britain* and *Holland*, That the same Person ought not to enjoy the Empire and the *Spanish Monarchy*, any more than that of *France*, nor would they be of any other Opinion now, but upon a Supposition, tho' I see no need for it, I must confess, that the contrary tended to putting those Dominions into the Hands of *France*.

If this was not the Reason, I Challenge all the Opposers of it to shew me one other Reason, why the Crown of *Spain* was determin'd to the present Emperor when but Arch-Duke, and when his Father and Elder Brother were both alive; by which Act, the Confederates did two Things very uncommon.

1. They Superseded all Pretence to the Doctrine of the Sacred Hereditary Right of Princes, for that King *Charles* had no Pretence to the Crown of *Spain* by Descent.
2. They Recogniz'd tacitly the Right of King *Philip*, by Vertue of a Gift; setting up King *Charles* by a Gift; whereas, if the Person whose Hereditary Right it was, could give it away to whom he pleas'd, then *Philip* had a Just Claim, whose Gift was before him; and if the Person whose Right it was, could not give it away, then *Charles* had no Claim at all, the immediate Heir being then alive, and not without a Probability of more Heirs.

If then it was not because an Emperor ought not to be King of *Spain* at the same Time, let the best Advocate in the World tell me, Why was not the Emperor *Leopold*, whose Right was Indisputable, and (if any Right is so) Indefeasible, Proclaim'd King of *Spain*, and after him, the Emperor *Joseph*?

The Thing was obvious to every Eye; it was declar'd to the Emperor at that Time, that the Confederates could by no means Agree, that the Empire and the *Spanish Monarchy* should be in the same Hand, and therefore, as he began the War in *Lombardy* alone without them, he should carry it on so too, unless he pleas'd to accept some Reasonable Satisfaction for his Pretensions, other than the Personal Possession; and upon this Foot the Grand Alliance was made, and afterwards, the Second Son of the Emperor, was named to the *Spanish Monarchy*.

If say it again, if any Man in *Britain* will say, upon what other Consideration the Emperor and his Eldest Son quitted the Crown of *Spain* to the Arch-Duke of *Austria*,

since King *Charles*, I will give up the Cause; there is Room enough for them to do it if they can, and no question they would have done it long ago, if they could — But this not being to be done, they choose to drop the Enquiry.

To this Deficiency in Argument, I put the Disaster of all that has happened since, viz. One Side leaning entirely to the Emperor, and the other to *France*, and both Destructive of the Protestant Interest, the last more immediately, the other as Dangerously, tho' more remote.

But now, should this Young Dauphin die, the Duke of *Savoy* standing just in the Place *Charles III.* did, at the Time of the Grand Alliance, and the same Reason being good against the Emperor *Charles*, as published then against his Father *Leopold* and Brother *Joseph*, there could be not a Word to say against the Duke of *Savoy* being King of *Spain*.

This would put the best End in the World to the present War; for it would remove the Cause on both Sides; the King of *France* could not object a Word, so would be silenced out of his own Mouth; the Confederates could plead no Dissatisfaction or Uneasiness; if any Man in the World has Merit to plead on his Side, besides Right, it is *He*; *Charles III.* had neither Right nor Merit, here is both; here could be no Danger of the House of *Bourbon*, or of *Austria*; not a Power in *Europe* would grutch him the full Possession; there would be no occasion to guard against his Greatness, fear his Ambition, or suspect him of Joining with *France*.

This, I think, would be worth Consideration still, if it be not too late; and in the mean Time, let any Man that can, tell us one Word they have to say against it.

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